

REMARKS

Favorable review is requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks. Editorial amendments have been made to the specification and the drawings. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the additional limitations of claims 5 and 6. Claim 7 has been amended to depend from claim 1. Claims 5, 6, 13, and 14 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1 - 4 and 7 - 12 are pending in the application.

Election/Restriction

Claims 4 and 10 - 11 have been withdrawn from consideration. The Applicants confirmed with Examiner Ridley on December 18, 2003 that the indication of claims 9 - 10 being withdrawn at page 2 of the Office Action was a typographical error, with claims 10 - 11 being intended. Applicants request that claims 4 and 10 - 11 be reinstated once generic claim 1 is allowed.

Abstract

The Abstract was objected to for being too long. The Abstract has been amended so that it is less than 150 words. The new Abstract is attached as a separate sheet. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Drawings

Figure 1 was objected to for not including a legend identifying it as "Prior Art". Figure 1 has been amended. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

The drawings were objected to because of Table 1. Table 1 has been incorporated into the specification at page 34 and the page previously displaying Table 1 has been deleted. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 13 - 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by De Rycker et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2,887,365). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and respectfully request reconsideration in view of the following comments. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claims 13 and 14 have been cancelled. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 1 - 3, 5, 7, and 12 - 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Trocciola et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,330,727). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and respectfully request reconsideration in view of the following comments.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the feature of claim 6, which was not included in the rejection. Therefore, the rejection is moot. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Trocciola et al. (above). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and respectfully request reconsideration in view of the following comments.

Claim 8 depends from claim 1, which is not suggested by Trocciola et al. as discussed above. Applicants do not concede the relevance of Trocciola et al. to claim 8. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 6 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Trocciola et al. (above) in view of De Rycker et al. (above). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and respectfully request reconsideration in view of the following comments.

De Rycker et al. are relied upon to suggest an element projecting inward from the inner surface of the gas passing tube. The rejection justifies the combination of Trocciola et al. and De Rycker et al. for the purpose of providing the reactor with uniform temperatures throughout the catalyst bed. However, Trocciola et al. teach that the temperature throughout the catalyst bed(s) should not be uniform. When there is one catalyst bed, Trocciola et al. provides that the inlet temperature of the catalyst bed should be much higher than the outlet temperature of the catalyst bed. See column 6, line 60 - column 7, line 10 of Trocciola et al. The temperature difference may be accomplished gradually or abruptly. See column 7, lines 5 - 10 of Trocciola et al. Therefore, because Trocciola et al. do not desire to keep the temperature uniform throughout the catalyst bed, there would have been no motivation or suggestion to combine De Rycker et al. with Trocciola et al. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

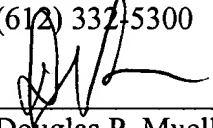
Conclusion

In view of the amendments and comments presented herein, favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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